



## Aversa founded in 1022

Edited By: Romualdo Guida | In: [Articles On Tourism](#) , [The History Of The City](#) , [History Of Aversa](#) |

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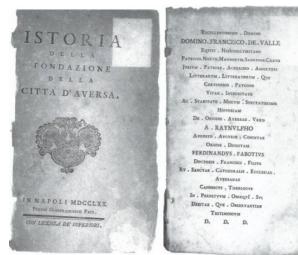


When you want to fix a historical date, he who pretends to be a historian (but to be one you would need to have the culture, for example, of a Professor Luciano Orabona!), Must seek reliable sources, if possible. It is evident, however, that many documents can only be found in museum exhibitions or in the archives of civil and ecclesiastical bodies which are difficult to access. For the past, many scholars have spent the best years of their lives in dusty libraries and archives. Often, however, they were their own archivists in charge of the work. Thus, numerous pages of a history have been drawn up that we can consider more or less reliable. Even if, as Eduard Carr said, we must always consider the historian's "point of view", that is, from which side he sees the river of history flowing.

So, to fix a more or less certain date for the Aversa Foundation , we went to look for what was reported by various medieval "chroniclers" who had personally experienced the events they told.

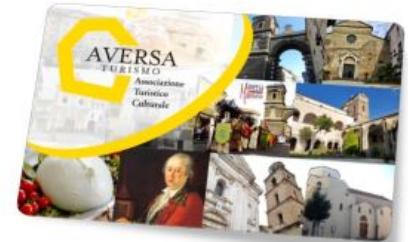
In the meantime, we shared many indications with Canon Fabozzi who, in 1770, did an exercise similar to what we attempted.

Comparing, therefore, through the *History of the founding* of Fabozzi, what is reported by **Ostiense** and the **Chronicle of Giovanni Berardo** , monk of the monastery of Pescara, who collects documents of the same monastery and arranges them in chronological order, the **date of the arrival of the Normans** is fixed. in **Italy in the year 1016** : «An. Ab Incarnat. Domini



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## LIVING AVERSA

### EVENTS IN THE CITY

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1016. Normans Melo Duce cooperunt expugnare Apuliam ». Wolf Protospatarius, then, reports : "Year 1017. Descendit Turnychi catapanus mense Maij".

And the Cronaca Cavense, not disagreeing, adds:

"1017. A Melo Duce Apulensium Normanni ad bellum contra Graecos conducuntur & in Asculo pugnatum est cum ipsis, & Graeci imperati sunt ».

"An. 1018. In Apulia proeliatum est cum Basilio catapano, & Melus Dux cum Normannis victor evasit ».

"An. 1019. Melus Dux post multas victorias a Graecis propter suorum desidiam superatus est in Cannis; ipse sauciatus in brachio, et capite fugit ad Pandulphum Principem Capuae, et pergit in Teutoniam » .

Always agreeing, Ostiense reports how, beaten at Canne, Melo repairs in Germany, asking for the help of King Henry.



Guglielmo Appulo, with Lupo Protospata affirms:

«An. 1020, descenderunt Saraceni cum Raica. Et hoc anno mortuus est ipse Amira, Melus Dux Apuliae ».

The "news", historically verified, is that Melo died in Bamberg on April 23, 1020. It is deduced that Melo, therefore, leads the Normans to Italy in 1016 and, after strenuous battles fought in Puglia against the Greeks, died in Germany in 1020.

Dead Melo, Guglielmo Apulo reports the election of the new leader in the person of Rainulfo Drengot:

*"Egregium quomdam mox elegere suorum  
Nomine Rannulfum, qui Princeps agminis esset  
Cujus mandatis fas contradicere non sit"*

Rainulf, therefore, at the death of Melo was recognized as leader by a good number of Normans. They were "camped" near Capua as early as 1019, and were used by Pandolfo to annoy his neighbors as Guglielmo Appulo reports:

*«Principibus latii prior atque potentior ipse  
Tunc erat, affines properant hoc Principe tuti  
Devastare locos, hostesque viriliter anguit».*



The Normans with **Dux Rainulfo** asked **Prince Pandolfo** to be able to settle permanently in a territory of the Principality of Capua. Pandolfo suggested: towards the South. Towards Naples, in order to act as a "buffer" between the Capuans and the Neapolitans. In a first instance, presumably in 1021, they settled near **Ponte a Selice**. When winter came, the Normans experienced a certain discomfort because the area, with the rains, became swampy and infested with frogs.

As Guglielmo Appulo reports, in fact:

*"Cumque locum Sedis primae munire pararent  
Undique densa palus, nec non et multa coaxans  
Copia ranarum prohibet munimina sedis"*

In the spring of 1022, therefore, Rainulf led his companions to an area even further south. Not being able to settle **"ad Septimum"** as it was already occupied by the **monastery of San Lorenzo** in which there were Benedictine monks who, even, had met in the Holy Land during the pilgrimage of the year 1001, he moved **"to Octabo"** where he found the votive church of **Sancte Paulum at Averze**. To top it off, there is also a beautiful mansion inhabited by a local squire who, only at the sight of the terrible Norman warriors, had to die of fear or, perhaps more likely, had to die practically colliding with some Norman sword or arrow.

## CITY MAP



## AVERSA: CITY GUIDE



## EVENTS IN THE CITY



## COLLABORATIONS





The palace occupied by Rainulfo was a tuff masonry construction that was divided into three levels: a basement that was connected to the hypogea of a palatine chapel dedicated to **St. Benedict**, a ground floor where there were two small rooms for the accommodation of the servants, a large stable also used for the shelter of carriages and a room for the storage of foodstuffs. On the main floor were the rooms for the accommodation of the lords and, in the support, the classic grain for the conservation of the annual wheat harvest.

Having thus freed the palace, Rainulfo thought well that this could be his home and that his friends could well camp, for the moment, in a surrounding area that he provided to "fortify", in a semicircular shape, with ditches and high hedges .

In fact, in the month of **April 1022 FONDO 'AVERSA**.

The nearby votive chapel dedicated to **St. Paul** was a few meters away from the palace-castle so as to be included in the circle of walls that was going to be built to replace the first protections made by ditches and hedges.

Inside the walls, the Normans built the first houses, in tuff and with terracotta tile roofs and equipped with a "socket" of land for the cultivation of vegetables and fruit. There was also a stable for the shelter of horses and for domestic animals such as pigs, hens, geese and other animals destined for the owners' table.



Outside the walls there were always the hamlets that the Normans had found but which they did not touch, as in their tradition, asking only that the indigenous inhabitants join them to defend the sacred soil of the new city. Also by granting asylum to people of all races and religions who want to join those who will be called **Aversani** .

All these events, of course, took place with the slowness of time. It is evident that in order for a message to reach from one city to another, even with fast riders, one or more days could pass. Or that, while groups of warriors were being organized, even just for a quick raid, it would take weeks. The life of the city was dictated by the times of agriculture which, in these lands, also yielded four crops a year as well as by breeding which, as the "pig cycle" reminds us, lasts about a year. What we, therefore, tell in an "amen" was certainly the "product" of more or less dilated times.

Thus, the fact that **Pandolfo di Capua** had long been engaged in skirmishes for the supremacy of the territory that was contending with the Duke of Naples **Sergio IV** means that "for a few years" the dispute was underway. And that Pandolfo had even managed to chase the opponent out of his city but, after a while, Sergio had managed to return to Naples, meant that the action had taken place in "a few years". From several sources it is said that Pandolfo had expelled Sergio from Naples in the year **1024** . Then the statement: "upon learning that the Normans had settled in a territory between Naples and Capua, eight miles from Capua, Sergio thought it best to meet Rainulfo, to whom he offered his sister **Sichelgaita** as his wifethat she was widowed by the death of her spouse Conte di Gaeta "is probably attributable to a date that can be placed between **1025** and **1026** .

The fact that the over forty-year-old **Rainulfo willingly** accepted and, therefore, married becoming Sergio's brother-in-law, took at least a few months. The Sources agree that the **reconquest of Naples** by Sergio IV took place in the year **1027** . It is in this reconquest that the "relative" Rainulfo "helped" Sergio. Thus it was that **Sergio** , also lord of the Casali that were in the Terra di Lavoro, decreed that they pay tribute to the newborn **Aversa** (now home of his sister). To ensure, then, that Aversa could preserve it from the attacks of **Pandolfo di Capua** , he invited Rainulfo to surround the city with adequate defenses and appointed his brother-in-law Count. Automatically**Aversa became a Shire** . It was the year **1030** . The date is confirmed by Fonti even if some scholars, even, would make the appointment of Rainulfo as



Conte rise to the year **1029**. The thing would also be plausible if we think that the reconquest of Naples took place in **1027**.

In short, not with a "document" but with the certainty of **REASONING** based on more or less certain dates deduced from several sources, we can affirm that

### AVERSA WAS FOUNDED IN 1022 AND MADE A COUNTY IN 1030

#### **Historical sources:**

- Lupi Protospatari Chronicon, in MGH, Scriptores, V, edited by GH Pertz, 1844,
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